

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 1L652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, JO

SUBJECT: LONDON TIMES ARTICLE ON VISIT OF SOVIET TEAM
TO JORDAN

1. ARTICLE IN LONDON TIMES OF MAY 14, BY ITS CORRESPONDENT PAUL MARTIN REPORTING FROM AMMAN, STATES "JORDAN'S THREAT TO TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR THE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM IT HAS FAILED TO ACQUIRE FROM THE WEST IS TO BE PUT TO THE TEST ON MONDAY WHEN A TOP-LEVEL SOVIET TEAM ARRIVES TO STUDY THE COUNTRY'S MISSILE NEEDS."

2. FOLLOWING ARE ADDITIONAL EXCERPTS FROM ARTICLE; "ALTHOUGH THE VISIT CONSTITUTES A DEADLINE, IT IS CLEAR THAT AMMAN STILL HOPES ARAB FINANCE CAN BE FOUND IN TIME TO CHOOSE INSTEAD THE AMERICAN HAWK GROUND-TO-AIR SYSTEM. NEVERTHELESS, JORDANIAN OFFICIALS, FROM THE PRIME MINISTER ON DOWN, HAVE GIVEN WARNING THAT IF FORCED TO, THE COUNTRY WOULD ARM ITSELF WITH A SOVIET
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SYSTEM..."

3. "ORIGINALLY IT WAS TO HAVE BEEN THE HAWK SYSTEM, BUT...THAT DEAL HAS FINALLY FOUNDERED ON FINANCE. SAUDI ARABIA...HAD AGREED TO FINANCE AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM FOR JORDAN AND EARMARKED \$350 MILLION. BUT THAT SUM HAS TURNED OUT TO BE LESS THAN HALF THE COST OF THE L4-BATTERY HAWK COMPLEX DEEMED NECESSARY, AND THE SAUDIS HAVE SHOWN NO WILLINGNESS TO MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE."

4. "MARSHAL PAVEL KUTACHOV' THE SOVIET AIR FORCE COMMANDER AND DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER, IS TO VISIT AMMAN AT THE HEAD OF A POWERFUL TEAM OF MISSILE EXPERTS AND OTHER AIR FORCE STAFF."

5. "EVER SINCE THE HAWK DEAL RAN INTO DIFFICULTIES, THE JORDANIANS HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS IN THE WEST, IN PARTICULAR THE BRITISH RAPIER AND THE FRENCH CROTALE."

ARMSTRONG

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